

The Children's Assessment Center

BREAKING THE SILENCE

A publication of The Children's Assessment Center, a safe place serving Harris County's sexually abused children.

The mission of The Children's Assessment Center is to provide a professional, compassionate and coordinated approach to the treatment of sexually abused children and their families and to serve as an advocate for all children in our community.

SPINDLETOP

What better way to wrap up Child Abuse Prevention Month than announcing a \$300,000 grant awarded by Spindletop Foundation? A previous supporter of The CAC, Spindletop was responsible for the funding that allowed the original system for taping interviews of each child victim. However, with over 40,000 VHS tapes now stored on site, the need for a digital process became apparent.

"Spindletop has been a long-time supporter of The CAC as one of our many youth charities", says Executive Director Constance White. Funding by Spindletop in 1992, purchased what at that time was considered "State of the Art" equipment. "Now" says White, "the old system is obsolete, and to upgrade is not only appropriate, it's necessary."

The \$300,000 grant is the single largest contribution ever awarded by the Foundation of Spindletop International, a philanthropic organization created by a consortium of Oil and Gas Industries. Their mission is to help area non-profits. The latest donation will allow The Children's Assessment Center to upgrade the recording technology it uses when



▲ Spindletop Check presentation from L to R: Celebrating the latest Grant from the Spindletop Foundation are CAC Board Members Paul Bragg, President Elect Yolanda Green, President Susan Wagner, Mary Austin Moody, Spindletop Executive Director Constance White, CAC Board Chairman Chris DeClaire, Executive Director Elaine Stolte, Spindletop President Duane Radke, Harris County District Attorney Chuck Rosenthal, Congressman Ted Poe, Rachel Capote Bristow, and Harris County Judge Robert Eckels.



▲ Constance White, Executive Director of Spindletop Charities International

interviewing young, sexually abused clients.

"Each month the center handles as many as 450 new cases. Most are abuse-related, but a growing number involve young witnesses to violent crimes" said Tammy Urban, CAC Supervisor of Interviewing Services. "Because CAC records the children's initial disclosures" Urban says, "this system will help minimize the number of times children must talk about

their experience with abuse."

As for Spindletop International, this particular grant meant more than just another day at the office, but Constance White says we'll continue what we've always done. Last year, Spindletop raised and distributed \$800,000 to 50 youth charity projects" she said. The group hopes to raise \$1 million in 2005.



PREDATOR:

One week is singled out during Child Abuse Prevention Month to be recognized as National Crime Victims Right's Week (April 10-16th). Doing honor to the issue of Child Abuse Prevention as well as Victim's Rights, Congressman Ted Poe chose The Children's Assessment Center as the ideal Houston venue to announce House Bill – H.R. 1355, the Child Predator Act of 2005 – designed to safeguard children from child predators by arming parents and law enforcement with additional tools. Joining the Congressman in making the announcement were Harris County Judge Robert Eckels, and CAC Executive Director Elaine Stolte.

Continued on page 3

◀ With Harris County Judge Eckels looking on, Congressman Ted Poe announces the "Child Predator Act of 2005" at The CAC kick-off of Child Abuse Prevention Month.



Hello Everyone

I can't even begin to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation for the members of **Spindletop International**.

This consortium of oil and gas companies and distinguished leaders has supported The CAC since our inception. On May 2, 2005, they awarded The CAC with a \$300,000

grant for our conversion from VHS forensic interviews to a comprehensive digital process for interviewing child victims of sexual abuse. Since the law requires The CAC to maintain our tapes of the children we interview for ten years after the child's 18th birthday, The CAC is storing nearly 40,000 videotapes. The new system will create a more efficient and effective process that will reduce the time it takes for a case to be processed through the system – eventually be web-based with the potential of additional secured audiences (judges, district attorney's, law enforcement officials, etc.) and someday may even be used across state lines.

At the check presentation, two longtime child advocates and CAC supporters, Harris County **Judge Robert Eckels** and **Congressman Ted Poe** thanked the Spindletop dignitaries who included: **Duane Ratke**, Spindletop President and President of Dominion Exploration and Production, **Morris Foster**, President, Exxon Mobile Production Company, **Jack Moore**, President Cameron Oil, **Wayne Richards**, Vice President, Schlumberger, **Galen Cobb**, Vice President, Halliburton, **David Williams**, Sr. Vice President, Diamond Offshore Drilling, **Rich Eichler**, CEO Hart Publications, and **Paul Bragg**, President and CEO Pride International and CAC Foundation Board member.

This impressive group of leaders took time from their schedules to be here to support The CAC, learn more about the work we do and tour our advocacy center. I was most impressed by their questions and found it a bit amusing when one CEO asked how we are able to manage all of these partner agencies and keep everyone focused on our mission? My response was through our unique and collaborative coordinating and partner council meetings and by establishing a trust and sincere appreciation for the incredible work done by each agency.

What makes all of this possible is our Public/Private Partnership that combines the strengths of the government with the entrepreneurialship of the private sector. I like to think of The CAC as being analogous to one of our Great Houston Rockets Basketball Players, giving their all during practice and then staying after practice to run additional laps and take extra free throws. The CAC, through our partnership, provides the services needed to the child victims and their family, and then continues with these services even after justice is served and the case is disposed.

Spindletop International – what a great example of supporting our Public/Private Partnership and creating a template that will be the example for other advocacy centers throughout the United States; you will be assisting abused children far beyond our reach here in Harris County. We salute you!

Take care,

Elaine Stoltz, Executive Director

elaine_stoltz@cac.co.harris.tx.us

Predator (continued from page 1)

The Child Predator Act aims to close the loopholes in current law that allow sexual offenders to slip through the cracks when they relocate from state to state by requiring registration within 10 days of a move as well as community notification, tightening the consequences for non-compliance, and mandating a free internet accessible database that clearly designates child predators – (as defined by the bill) those individuals who commit a sexual offense against a minor age 13 or younger.

Congressman Poe continues his passionate work on behalf of crime victims and child victims in particular. In addition to establishing and serving as Chair of the first-ever Congressional Victim's Right's Caucus, Congressman Poe has become an outspoken advocate against a reduction in funding for the Crime Victims Crime Act (VOCA).

According to the National Children's Alliance, one out of every four girls and one out of every six boys is at risk of sexual abuse by the age of 18.

During his April 4th testimony on the House floor, the Congressman spoke eloquently of The Children's Assessment Center, calling The CAC "a standard bearing organization, and a prime example of how a public/private partnership can lead the way to help those victimized by sexual predators." "For over 22 years as a felony court judge" Rep. Poe says, "I witnessed first-hand the plight of crime victims and their healing process, which often began with participating in the judicial proceedings and continued as they received counseling and other services to aid in their recovery."

According to the National Children's Alliance, one out of every four girls and one out of every six boys is at risk of sexual abuse by the age of 18. And according to Congressman Poe "this problem is not going away until we focus the community's attention on the importance of prevention."



▲ Celebrating the start of Child Abuse Prevention Month are CAC Board Chairman Chris DeClaire, Harris County Judge Robert Eckels, CAC Executive Director Elaine Stoltz and Board President Susan Wagner.



Cherish the Child

For the second consecutive year, The Children's Assessment Center held the "Cherish the Child" Donor Appreciation Reception to honor those who've made major contributions to the success of The CAC. The now annual Reception is an opportunity to recognize and award those who may choose to avoid the spotlight, choosing to let their actions speak for them instead.

As guests unwound from a busy day of protecting children and dispensing justice, they were treated to the sweet sound of soft classical music provided by Virtuosi of Houston. Attending were Houston Rocket Star and NBA Hall-of-Famer, Clyde Drexler, and several CAC Board members, including Roy Marsh, Rachel Capote Bristow, Susan Wagner, Yolanda Green, Christopher DeClaire, Sylvia Brauer, Al Fridkin, Chester Jones and Bruce Reiser.

An eloquent keynote address by Judge Michael McSpadden kicked off the evenings festivities. An ardent supporter of The CAC and of

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▲ Enjoying the Cherish the Child reception are Judge Mark Carter, Rockets/ Comets Owner Leslie Alexander, and Rockets Hall of Fame Guard Clyde Drexler.



▲ CAC Board member James Mercurio accepts a Cherish the Child award on behalf of Bank of America.



▲ Keller Williams Cares Team: David & Denise Mack, Roland Duhon, CAC Development Director Susan Williams, Michael Clapp, Maryann Butler and Debbie Row.



▲ Judge Michael McSpadden holds court with Judges Mike Anderson, Brock Thomas and CAC supporter Wilbur Wagner.



▲ CAC Board Member Yolanda Green presents Eugene Werlin Jr. with the Cherish the Child award for his outstanding contributions as a Foundation Board member.



▲
Mistress of Ceremonies
Gina Gaston keeps things
moving at the Spirit of Spring.



▲
Spirit of Spring Chair Debbie Clemens and husband Roger are surrounded by
guests eagerly awaiting the luncheon and fashion show at The Houstonian.

SPIRIT OF Spring



▲
"Spirit of Spring Event
Chair Brenda Koch and Auction
Chair Phyllis Williams take a final stroll
down the runway at the 6th Annual
Luncheon and Fashion show."

Fun, Food and Fashion... Supporters of The CAC have discovered a new way to usher in *The Spirit of Spring*. A disco beat and a standing ovation for 29 celebrity models along with Event Chair Brenda Koch and Auction Chair Phyllis Williams rocked The Houstonian Hotel ballroom after a lively Spirit of Spring Luncheon and Fashion Show honoring Debbie Clemens on April 22nd.

The sixth annual event, benefiting the Children's Assessment Center, sold out well before invitations went out and the crowd swelled to more than 460 energetic supporters. The net proceeds from the event

more than tripled last years total, bringing in close to \$85,000 for The CAC. "We couldn't be happier that our event means The CAC can continue providing excellent programs for children who've been sexually abused" said Koch.

One surprise fashion maven on the scene was Astro's Ace Roger Clemens, proud husband of honoree Debbie Clemens. Also soaking up springtime fun were board members Sylvia Brauer, Al Fridkin, Rachel Capote, Roy Marsh, Susan Wagner, and Yolanda Green. Channel 13's Gina Gaston played Mistress of Ceremonies while colleague Tom Koch, husband of the event chair, pitched in as live auctioneer, bringing in a quick \$14,000.

Celebrity models from television, print, radio and the sports world wore fashions from Gayla Bentley Designs, Foley's, Debbie Clemens' new company Jacket Happy, Lucho, Maaza's Collection and Tootsies. Among the many models strutting the runway: Channel 11's Lisa Foronda, Channel 2's Frank Billingsley, Channel 13's Don Nelson in an outfit direct from India, KRBE's Maria Todd, Meera and Johnny Bravo, along with Marcus Coleman of the Houston Texans, Univision 45's Beatriz De Alvarado, Sherry Williams and Yolanda Green of WB39, and Melinda Spaulding of KRIV's Fox 26.

From the moment bidding began on the silent auction until the final turn by Brenda Koch and Phyllis Williams on the runway, the crowd was all smiles, giggles and full out laughter as good time was had by all. In fact, local media personalities have already begun clamoring to "make the list" for the 2006 *Spirit of Spring*...



▲
Channel 2's Rachel
McNeil takes her turn
on the runway



◀ Executive Director Elaine Stolte, Development Director Susan Williams, Spirit of Spring Chair Brenda Koch, Honoree Debbie Clemens and husband Roger celebrate a successful event in support of The Children's Assessment Center.



the recent "Predator Bill" sponsored by Congressman Ted Poe, Judge McSpadden thanked The CAC "for blazing a path for other child advocacy groups to follow." The Judge challenged others in the community to "take up the cause of protecting our children and preventing children from being exploited or becoming victims of sexual abuse." "The CAC is a fine place for those who've been harmed, but we need to stop the abuse before it becomes necessary for the Center to become involved."

Serving as Mistress of Ceremonies was our own Foundation Board President-Elect, Ms. Yolanda Green. Ms. Green and current CAC Board President Susan Wagner presided over a combination of Awards and Door Prize giveaways. The first award recipient needed little introduction. With six championship trophies in hand, Les Alexander, owner of the Houston Rockets and Houston Comets, has come to represent excellence in Houston sports. His role in community projects is no different. In recognition of Child Abuse Prevention Month, Mr. Alexander was presented with the "Cherish the Child" award for his contributions to the success of The CAC. "I'm pleased to support an organization that gives a voice to children who might otherwise go unheard" said Alexander, a recent addition to the The CAC Foundation Board of Directors.

In turn, Ms. Wagner presented awards to each of the other Cherish the Child honorees; Eugene Werlin, Jr. and Bank of America, represented by former CAC Board Member James Mercurio. Werlin has been a long time Foundation Board member at The CAC and helped lead the Board's capital building campaign.

James Mercurio, a former member of The CAC Foundation's Board Finance Committee accepted the award on behalf of Bank of America. Bank of America – Houston was recognized by The CAC for their corporate giving and contribution of leadership. "Jim Mercurio is a prime example of private sector ingenuity leading to improvements in community resources" said Elaine Stolte, Executive Director of the Children's Assessment Center.

The evening was full of fun and VIP guests were around every corner. Judge McSpadden was not the only judge on hand either. Also enjoying the refreshments and good company were Judges Mark Carter, Brock Thomas, Kent Ellis, Laura Higley, and Mike Anderson. Congratulations once again to Mr. Alexander, Mr. Werlin, Mr. Mercurio and Bank of America.



▲ Rockets Owner Leslie Alexander proudly displays his new award.



▲ New CAC Foundation Board member Les Alexander accepts the Cherish the Child award from Yolanda Green.



▲ Cherish the Child award recipient Leslie Alexander with CAC Executive Director Elaine Stolte and Elizabeth Brown.



▲ CAC Board members Rachel Capote Bristow and Roy Marsh share a hug and a smile.



▲ Members of musical ensemble Virtuosi are all smiles as they pose with Rocket's Hall of Famer Clyde Drexler. From L to R: Lauren Haley, Maryam Parhizkar, Christine Wisch, Nathan Haley.

Please Take Notes!

- © **6th Annual Polo Italia & Risotto Festival**
 Sunday, September 11, 2005
 at the Houston Polo Club
 For information:
 Susan K. Williams (713) 986-3483
- © **3rd Annual Keller Williams Charity Golf Classic**
 Friday, September 23, 2005
 at The Clubs of Kingwood
 For information:
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- © **13th Annual Van Chancellor Celebrity Golf Classic**
 Thursday, October 27, 2005
 at Wildcat Golf Club
 For information:
 Lisa Bourgoyne (713) 986-3534
- © **"Touching a Life Gala" Sponsored by Behind the Bench**
 Friday, February 17, 2006
 The National Basketball Wives Association holds this gala every year in the host city during the NBA All-Star Weekend

\$100,000.00 +

Spindletop Charities, Inc.

\$10,000.00 +

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CAC Board members Chester Jones and Yolanda Green focus on business at the 2005 Cherish the Child Reception.



Sometimes words aren't enough for CAC kids... the message on this 12-year old's handprint says it all...



Looking elegant for the 6th Annual Spirit of Spring are CAC Youth Services Coordinator Lisa Baldwin Andrews, Assistant Director Kathy Wells, and Training Coordinator Karen Kennard.



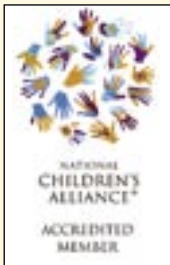
CAC Board President Elect Yolanda Green enjoys the company of CAC Staffer Sharyn Malatok and fellow CAC supporter Erin Anthony.

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Breaking the Cycle of Abuse
 One Child at a Time

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SPRIT OF Spring



▲ Behind the scenes at Spirit of Spring are Honoree Debbie Clemens, Fashion Show Producer Todd Ramos, and Chair Brenda Koch



The Children's Assessment Center
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